

# Ignite Round 4 “Summer 2015” Release Notes

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## **Release History:**

Round 1 // aka “Beta” // Released March 2013

Round 2 // aka “2014” // Released March 2014

Round 3 // aka “Winter 2015” // Released October 2014

Round 4 // aka “Summer 2015” // Released March 2015

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## **The following changes made for the release of Ignite Round 4 (“Summer 2015”)**

1. Provide more guidance to finalist teams on how they should pitch their project idea by providing a training on storytelling, showing them a video of a previous presentation and/or by some other means.
2. Manage the funds entirely in-house. Currently, funds are delegated to the teams via Intra-Departmental Delegations of Authorities. However, this change is warranted for the following reasons:
  - a. ASFR and OGC have prevented the GDM funds from being delegated to certain teams
  - b. Many teams are not using their funds at all;
  - c. Some teams that are using their funds aren't necessarily using them;
  - d. Some teams are finding themselves in multiple conversations with their procurement staff to explain the Ignite program and why they can spend their money on something.
  - e. At a high-level, we seek to free up the HHS staff member so that they can simply explore their idea and not get bogged down in the processes of bureaucracy.
3. In alignment with the above, remove the option for teams to ‘waive’ their funds.
4. Hire one additional Ignite Instructor each round, bringing the total to 4.
5. Provide 1 on 1 welcome and overview calls for the selected teams.

6. To reflect the pre-work needed, have the official start date of the program occur prior to the Boot Camp.
  7. Cluster the teams prior to the Boot Camp. As with current round, clusters are created by the Instructors based upon project type, team dynamics, and other factors.
  8. Make minor improvements to the Boot Camp, including: building in breaks, better structuring of content, honing focus entirely on customer segments and value proposition, using fewer private sector / DC iCorps jargon and more government sector jargon (e.g. “Stakeholders” instead of “Customers”; “Skeptics” instead of “Saboteurs”.) Details of these changes are found in other documents.
  9. Provide a 4 hour deep-dive, design-thinking session with each team 2-4 weeks following the Boot Camp.
  10. Provide a more concrete list of online tools that teams could use. These include: AWS sandbox; uberconference.com; asana.com; invisionapp.com; others.
  11. Have all meetings for the duration of the entire program on the calendar prior to the Boot Camp.
  12. Provide trainings once a month on topics pertinent to their expected project progress. Topics may include: Interview synthesis; The creation of Personas; Testing and Metrics; Making the pitch; or others.
  13. Provide more information as to the definition of a “low-res prototype”.
  14. Have each team leave the Boot Camp with: sticky notes, sharpie pens, hand-held dry-erase boards, Luma cards.
  15. Provide a mechanism for teams to log their interviews.
  16. Replace “Shark Tank” with Demo Day, the focus of which is to share-out lessons learned. Separate this event from the actual pitches the teams will / could make to their key decision maker(s).
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## Key Dates for Version 3.0 (“Summer 2015”):

1. March 1, 2015: Begin Accepting Applications
  2. March 31, 2015: Applications Due
  3. April 13, 2015: Finalists Notified
  4. April 28-30, 2015: Finalists’ Pitches
  5. May 4, 2015: Notify OpDiv/StaffDiv Heads
  6. May 11, 2015: Selected Teams Notified
  7. June 1, 2015: Projects Begin
  8. June 8-10, 2015: Three-Day Boot Camp for Selected Teams
  9. September 17, 2015: Projects End
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## Background

The HHS Ignite Accelerator, a program of the HHS IDEA Lab, supports Department staff with bold ideas on how to improve their office or agency’s ability to carry out its mission.

In the spirit of private sector startup accelerator programs, Ignite offers a number of benefits to selected teams:

- Seed Funding
- Training / Coaching
- Mentorship
- Safe Space

Ignite has three core goals:

- To provide a space for the testing of high-risk, high-reward projects
- To expose HHS staff in problem solving tools and techniques
- To facilitate greater personal connections through the building of a cross-departmental network

Ignite is a competitive program. Since its launch in 2013, Ignite has supported 37 project teams from the 211 proposals submitted across 3 rounds.